

George Washington Grover House
1520 Market Street
Galveston
Galveston County
Texas

HABS No. TX-296

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. TX-296

GEORGE WASHINGTON GROVER HOUSE

Location: 1520 Market Street, Galveston, Galveston County,
Texas

Present Owner: Cecile M. Chambers

Present Use: Residence

Significance: George Washington Grover was a pioneer Texan,
Indian fighter, member of the Santa Fe Expedition
of 1841, California 49-er and Galveston
merchant. His house is one of the few surviving
pre-Civil War homes in Galveston and a good
example of the Greek Revival style.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Built 1859.
2. Builder: George Washington Grover built the house. The house is constructed of locally burned brick and lumber imported from Pensacola, Florida.
3. Alterations and additions: The only enlargement to the house came some years later with the addition to the rear.

Several alterations, however, have taken place after damage caused by natural disasters. The north wall and roof were lost in the hurricane of 1945 and additional damage was incurred by a tropical hurricane in 1961.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

George Washington Grover, born November 9, 1819 at Sacketts Harbor, New York, was a pioneer Texan, Indian fighter and early Galveston merchant. He first settled in Texas with his family seven miles below the city of Austin, at that time, in 1840, on the very edge of the Texas frontier. In the autumn of the year, Grover participated in the battle of Plum Creek in retribution for the celebrated Indian raid on Linnville.

In 1841 when the Texas Santa Fe expedition set out with 320 men, Grover was one of that number. The expedition was captured by Mexican authorities and marched to Mexico City where they were

imprisoned and impressed to do hard labor in chain gangs. During this trying time Grover kept a person diary which has survived to the present day.

Following his eventual release, Grover returned to Cincinnati and from there went to California with the 49-ers. He panned for gold and eventually established a trading store. He was joined in this mercantile activity by a life-long friend, Wright S. Andrews.

Sometime early in the 1850's, the two moved to Galveston and there established a wholesale and retail grocery and ship chandlery store.

Grover was an alderman in the city council of Galveston at the beginning of the Civil War and was elected mayor pro-tem when the elected mayor left Galveston.

In the year 1859 Grover erected his home, a two story Greek Revival building. The bricks were burned at Brown's brickyard on the Island and the lumber was imported Pensacola yellow pine.

During the Civil War the building was hit by a naval shell which exploded in the north wall during the battle of Galveston in 1863. In November 1885 the surrounding forty block area was swept clear by a disastrous fire leaving only this house and two others standing.

C. Bibliography:

1. Secondary and published sources:

Brindley, Anne. Historic Galveston Homes.
Galveston Historical Society, 1951, p. 14.

Galveston News. December 22, 1901.

James, Ann. Houston Post. November 10, 1966, p. 2; Section C.

Morgan, William M. Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church, Galveston, Texas, 1841-1953. Houston and Galveston: The Anson Jones Press, 1954, pp. 303-305.

Prepared by: John C. Garner, Jr.
Director
Galveston Architecture Inventory
January, 1967

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The house is a two story brick building with a hipped roof and two bay front galleries. It has a typical Greek Revival side-hall plan with a stairhall on the west side. Later additions have been added to the rear.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The two story house measures 30' x 80' in overall dimensions.
2. Foundations: Probably brick grade beams
3. Wall construction: Brick with stucco quoins
4. Structural systems: Load-bearing masonry walls with pine sills and joists. Brick interior walls.
5. Porches: A double two bay gallery extends across the full front facade. The upper story is screened in. Fire insurance maps of 1889 and 1899 indicate that there was no porch during that time. The present gallery, then, probably dates after 1900.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The entrance door has glass transom above and glass side lights in typical Greek Revival style. The door is heavily molded and has four panels.
 - b. Windows: The windows are six-over-six light double-hung wood sash. Exterior louvered shutters are now gone.
7. Roof: Hipped, wood framed; of recent date.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: Characteristic Greek Revival side hall plan. The parlor lies east of the hall. Upper floor contains bedrooms opening onto hall.
2. Stairway: An open straight stair with winders along west wall of stair hall; walnut turned newel post and balustrade.
3. Floor: Two inch oak flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are papered. Original ceiling exists only in the stair hall. Heavily molded plaster

cornice.

5. Doors: Interior doors are wood with four molded panels.
6. Trim: Molded trim around all openings and base.
7. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Hardware: Mortice locks.
 - b. Lighting: Modern electric fixtures.
 - c. Heating: Modern gas stoves. Originally heated by marble fireplaces.

D. Site:

1. Orientation and General Setting: The house occupies lot 12, Block 555 and faces south on Market street.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Galveston Survey was jointly sponsored by the National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation and the Galveston Historical Foundation Inc., and developed under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). The historical data was written by John C. Garner, Jr., acting as the Director of the Galveston Architecture Inventory. The written data was edited for transmittal to the Library of Congress in the summer of 1980 by Kent R. Newell of HABS staff. The photographs were taken by Allen Stross in the summer of 1967.